

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. Claim 1 was amended to clarify the claim language and to correct a grammatical error. No new matter was introduced as a result of the amendment. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maggenti* (US Pat. 6,295,284) in view of *Sundhar* (US Pat 6,201,258) and further in view of *Kawamura et al.* (US 2001/0054069). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest the present invention, as described in all independent claims 1, 4, 7 and 10.

Specifically, *Maggenti* does not teach or suggest a “common phone number issued by a communication terminal” as recited in claims 1, 4, 7 and 10. The “telephone number” relied upon by the Examiner in *Maggenti* teaches that each telephone number is used as an identification number for each person “whom the net member wishes to communicate” (col. 6, lines 57-62). Thus, the number is not “common” to the system, but rather it is unique to each of the registered users. It follows that *Maggenti* does not disclose “registering a predetermined communication terminal so as to correspond to said issued common phone number” as recited in claims 1 and 7, and similarly recited in claims 4 and 10. While *Maggenti* discloses the presence of “members” in the disclosure (col. 11, lines 30-40), *Maggenti* is silent regarding the means through which the “members” are registered. In any case, since *Maggenti* does not disclose a “common phone number”, the “members” referred to in the prior art cannot be said to “correspond” to the common number.

Maggenti also fails to disclose a message management unit. In this regard, the Applicant requires clarification regarding the Examiner’s position that *Maggenti* discloses means for sending a message file via the message management unit as claimed in claims 1, 4, 7 and 10. The Examiner incorrectly stated in the Office Action that *Maggenti* disclosed a message management unit (Office Action page 3, line 9). However, the Office Action went further in (correctly) stating that “*Maggenti* fails to disclose a message management unit” (Office Action page 3, line 13). The Applicant respectfully submits that *Maggenti* does not disclose a message management unit, and that the Examiner’s statement indicating the contrary be stricken.

Regarding the "bulletin board unit" limitation recited in claims 1, 4, 7 and 10, the Examiner similarly stated incorrectly that *Sundhar* disclosed a bulletin board unit (Office Action page 4, line 6). However, the Office Action then contradicted this statement 11 lines down by (correctly) stating that "*Maggenti* and *Sundhar* fail to disclose a bulletin board" (Office Action page 4, line 17). Again, the Applicant respectfully submits that *Maggenti* and *Sundhar* do not disclose a bulletin board unit, and that the Examiner's statement indicating the contrary be stricken.

The *Sundhar* reference discloses an apparatus for allowing a subscriber to access messages from a common voicemail system for a number of different phones, i.e., a message left for any of the phones is stored in a common voicemail box which is accessible by any of the different phones. The reference teaches that all or selected phones may be notified of the message in the voicemail box.

In the apparatus of *Sundhar*, when a message is stored in a voicemail box, one or more phones in the network are merely notified of the existence of this message via a message indicator (see col.4, lines 23-38). It does not, however, teach or suggest sending a message file itself to a communication terminal in the network via a message management unit, as in the present invention.

Moreover, the message indicator 104 of *Sundhar* cannot be cited as disclosing a bulletin board unit as claimed in the present invention. The message indicator of *Sundhar* merely indicates that a message is stored in the voicemail, for example, by a flashing light. It is not used for leaving the message itself to be accessed by other communication terminals in the network, as in the present invention.

Regarding *Kawamura*, the filing date of the published application is December 5, 2000, which is subsequent to the filing date of the present invention (September 5, 2000). Accordingly, the *Kawamura* reference is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), or §103(a). For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the rejections are improper and should be withdrawn, as claims 1, 4, 7 and 10, and their respective dependent claims 2-3, 5-6, 8-9 and 11-12, are allowable over the cited reference.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Should there be any additional issues that the

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Reply to Office Action of October 28, 2003

Examiner would like to address, the Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney.

The Applicant has enclosed a petition for a one-month extension of time, along with a check in the amount of \$110. Please charge Deposit Account 02-1818 for any insufficiency of payment.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 

Peter Zura

Reg. No. 48,196

P.O. Box 1135

Chicago, Illinois 60690-1135

Phone: (312) 807-4208

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